

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the present application:

**Listing of Claims:**

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1. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) configured for disposition within ~~[[the]]~~ a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent article comprising a fluid permeable cover, a baffle, and an absorbent (66) secured to the cover and situated between the cover and baffle, the absorbent having a principal longitudinal axis, a principal transverse axis, first (80) and second (82) spaced apart longitudinal sides, first (76) and second (78) spaced apart transverse end areas, the longitudinal sides together with the transverse end areas generally forming a periphery of the absorbent, and at least one notch (100) situated in at least one transverse end area; wherein the at least one notch

extends through an entire z-axis thickness of the absorbent,

extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 3 mm,

and

has a width of no less than about 10 mm at the periphery of the absorbent; and

the depth and width of the at least one notch are sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris, when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch in a transverse end area that is closest the clitoris.

2. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the notch ~~extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent~~ has a width of no less than about 15 mm.

3. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 10 mm. ~~has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule.~~

4. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[2]]~~ 1, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

5. (canceled)

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[6]]~~ 1, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

8. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 1, ~~further comprising a liquid impermeable wherein the~~ baffle (64) is liquid impermeable.

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 1, further comprising at least one other notch situated in at least one longitudinal side of the absorbent.

11. (original) The absorbent article of claim 1, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.

12. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) configured for disposition within ~~[[the]]~~ a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent article comprising a fluid permeable cover, a baffle, and an absorbent (66) secured to the cover and situated between the cover and baffle, the absorbent having a principal longitudinal axis, a principal transverse axis, first (80) and second (82) spaced apart longitudinal sides, first (76) and second (78) spaced apart transverse end areas, the longitudinal sides together with the transverse end areas generally forming the periphery of the absorbent, and at least one notch (100) situated in the periphery of the absorbent; wherein the at least one notch

is situated in at least one transverse end area,

extends through an entire z-axis thickness of the absorbent,

extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 5 mm,

and

has a width of no less than about 10 mm at the periphery of the absorbent; and

the depth and width of the at least one notch are sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's perineum, when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch in a transverse end area that is closest to the perineum.

13. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 12, wherein the notch ~~extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent~~ has a width of no less than about 15 mm.

14. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[13]]~~ 12, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 10 mm. ~~has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule.~~

15. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[13]]~~ 12, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

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16. (canceled)

17. (canceled)

18. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[17]]~~ 12, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

19. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 12, ~~further comprising a liquid impermeable~~ wherein the baffle (64) is liquid impermeable.

20. (canceled)

21. (canceled)

22. (canceled)

23. (original) The absorbent article of claim 12, wherein the absorbent further comprises a superabsorbent polymer.

24. (currently amended) An absorbent article (40) configured for disposition within ~~[[the]]~~ a vestibule (42) of a female wearer, the absorbent article comprising a fluid permeable cover, a baffle, and an absorbent (66) secured to the cover and situated between the cover and baffle, the absorbent having a principal longitudinal axis, a principal transverse axis, first (80) and second (82)

spaced apart longitudinal sides, first (76) and second (78) spaced apart transverse end areas, the longitudinal sides together with the transverse end areas generally forming the periphery of the absorbent article, and at least one notch (100) situated in at least one longitudinal side; wherein the at least one notch

extends through an entire z-axis thickness of the absorbent,

extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 5 mm,

and

has a width of no less than about 10 mm at the periphery of the absorbent; and

the depth and width of the at least one notch are sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris, when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule with the notch in a longitudinal side that is closest to the clitoris.

A10 25. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 24, wherein the notch ~~extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent~~ has a width of no less than about 15 mm.

26. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[25]]~~ 24, wherein the notch extends inward from the periphery of the absorbent to a depth of no less than about 10 mm. ~~has dimensions sufficient to allow the absorbent article to maintain a substantially spaced relationship from a female wearer's clitoris (60) when the absorbent article is disposed within the vestibule.~~

27. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[25]]~~ 24, wherein the notch has a depth (102) no greater than about 30 mm; and wherein the notch has a width (104) no greater than about 30 mm.

28. (canceled)

29. (canceled)

30. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim ~~[[29]]~~ 24, wherein the cover encloses the absorbent.

31. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 24, ~~further comprising a liquid impermeable~~ wherein the baffle (64) is liquid impermeable.

32. (canceled)

33. (currently amended) The absorbent article of claim 24, further comprising at least one other  
A10 notch situated in at least one transverse end area.

34. (original) The absorbent article of claim 24, wherein the absorbent further comprises a  
superabsorbent polymer.

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